

**From:** Thomas, Russell [Thomas.Russell@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 5/3/2021 5:11:49 PM  
**To:** Gwinn, Maureen [gwinn.maureen@epa.gov]; Perron, Monique [Perron.Monique@epa.gov]; Lowit, Anna [Lowit.Anna@epa.gov]; Craig, Evisabel [Craig.Evisabel@epa.gov]; Tietge, Joe [Tietge.Joe@epa.gov]; Linnenbrink, Monica [Linnenbrink.Monica@epa.gov]; Stedeford, Todd [Stedeford.Todd@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Sipes, Nisha [Sipes.Nisha@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** New animal use legislation

All,

Per our call, see below.

Rusty

## **Lawmakers Renew Efforts to Protect Animals in Government Labs**

**Bipartisan legislation builds on current policies at the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments, Food and Drug Administration and National Institutes of Health.**

APRIL 29, 2021

- 
- 

A pair of bipartisan senators reintroduced a bill earlier this week that would facilitate the retirement or adoption of animals used in federal agencies' research.

Sens. Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Gary Peters, D-Mich., introduced the [Animal Freedom from Testing, Experimentation and Research Act](#) on Tuesday. About 20 agencies use animals for research, according to the [Government Accountability Office](#). The federal government experimented on about 38,000 animals (mainly cats, dogs, monkeys and rabbits) in fiscal 2019 for research purposes and many agencies currently don't have formal retirement or adoption policies for animals that aren't needed anymore. As a result, many are killed, said the senators in a [press release](#).

"There is no reason regulated lab animals that are suitable for adoption or retirement should be killed by federal agencies," Collins said. "Our bipartisan legislation would continue to build on the successful policies at [the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments, Food and Drug Administration and National Institutes of Health] while directing all other federal agencies to facilitate and encourage the retirement of animals to help ensure they are placed in loving homes or sanctuaries." She has championed previous legislative efforts to protect great apes and chimpanzees used in federal research.

The new bill would direct all agencies to develop their own regulations through the notice and comment process to ensure that animals "whenever possible, are retired and not killed," said the press release. It would also require veterinarians to evaluate animals mentally and physically before they leave agencies to help their transition to a new home.

The legislation would also encourage agencies to work with nonprofits to place retired animals in shelters and sanctuaries nationwide; not just those near the research facilities.

“Ensuring that animals no longer used in federal research can be adopted into loving homes is simply the right thing to do,” Peters said. “I am proud to partner with Senator Collins to reintroduce this bipartisan legislation that would encourage federal agencies to collaborate with the shelters that can provide these animals a safe, nurturing environment for the next phase of their lives.”

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., is an original co-sponsor of the bill in July 2019. A House version was also introduced then.

The Maine Federation of Humane Societies and White Coat Waste Project, a watchdog group that advocates for more sensible spending as well as proper treatment of animals, support the bill.

“Taxpayers bought these animals, and a supermajority of us wants Uncle Sam to give them back,” Justin Goodman, vice president of advocacy and public policy of the group, said in a statement to *Government Executive* on Thursday. In recent years they have “successfully secured the retirement of kittens from the [Department of Agriculture], dogs from the VA, primates from the FDA and rabbits from the [Environmental Protection Agency] and helped enact formal lab animal adoption policies at the NIH, FDA and VA.”